**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.18**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 1 – 2021**

**18. Mr A M Shaik Emam (NFP) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

 Whether, given the fact that citizens of Israel are able to travel to the Republic without a visa, but that Palestinians are not allowed the same privileges, as they have to apply for visas and comply with stringent conditions, he will elaborate on the (a) reasons why Israel is being treated differently and (b) measures that his department intends to implement in order to remedy the situation; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? NW19E

 **REPLY:**

It is correct that passport holders of Israel are not required to be in possession of port of entry visas for holiday and business visits. This decision was, however, not taken by the Minister of Home Affairs, but by Cabinet. The decision and the countries who benefitted from the decision is documented in Cabinet Memorandum number 8 of 1992, dated 23 April 1992. In so far as Palestine is concerned, the Minister of Home Affairs has already approved a submission seeking a waiver of visa requirements for diplomatic and official/service passport holders. Currently the necessary protocols are being applied in order to conclude a reciprocal visa waiver agreement between the two countries. In so far as normal passport holders are concerned, the Department of Home Affairs is exploring ways in which to lower the restrictive travel measures which applies to Palestine nationals. The latter process is more extensive and requires wider consultation which is not the case with diplomatic and official/service passport holders

**END**